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Subject : National Unity.

PLYMOUTH PULPIT:

A Weekly Publication

OF

SERMONS

PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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NATIONAL UNITY.

"And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim."—ISAIAH XI. 12, 13.

The feuds and separations of the tribes of Israel caused their ultimate destruction. Ephraim, lying midway, and covering the territory subsequently known as Samaria, and Judah, lying on the southern part, two of the strongest tribes, had rivalries of ambition; and each sought to increase its own strength by dividing the strength of its antagonist. In like manner Greece was internally weakened by the strife of its little states. It was one of the signs and promises of the latter-day glory, that a time should come when contiguous tribes would vex and harass each other no more, and would study union and not division.

The world and the race stand, to our modern thought, as Israel stood to the thought of the devout Jew. This passage has, therefore, a striking application to our land. The gathering together here of the outcasts of nations will not have escaped your attention. Neither will the dangers of alienation and of quarrel; nor again, the promises of unity. All of them have, or may be made to have, direct application to our own nation, and to our own times. I do not propose to consider in symmetrical fullness the dangers of disintegration, nor to suggest all, nor even all of the important, remedial influences. The shortness of the time justifies me in sketching in a few studies rather than in elaborating the whole picture.

Let me begin by mentioning the disturbing influences which are coming upon us through the great movement hither of emigrants from all the world.

As the Nile, in its great annual rise, brings down something of the soil of every formation through a thousand miles, and deposits it as slime for the sun to turn to soil and fruitfulness; as the Mississippi, with its greater tributary, the Missouri, carry to the fat regions around its Delta a tribute gathered from almost every point of latitude and lon-

gitude on the continent, so upon these United States, with annual deposit, come the emigrating freshets of the world. It falls upon us like mud. It shall be our richest soil. When it is aerated, and when intelligence and religion and liberty shall have penetrated it, it will be most precious. Its trouble is all now, and at the first. Its bounty and reward shall go on with increasing abundance to the very end. Can this nation survive, however, the chill and fever of malarial influence engendered by this new soil, until by culture the vast mass of new deposit shall, by the sun, the air and the plow, be sweetened, and become as wholesome for men as it is fertile for grain?

Men change their country, their national dress, their laws and governments; but their personal habits, their religious beliefs, their domestic traits, their manners and customs, their pleasures and amusements, they cannot easily change. They bring hither with them their unconscious conflicts. Things that at home are most innocent, they find here to be pugnacious. Nor do they know whence the conflict springs.

There is the everlasting conflict of religious ideas, and the organizations to which they give rise. We import vast material of spiritual warfare. The Catholic sect is a valiant fighter; and it grows apace among us, as it has a right to do. It has its own genius which it should attempt to spread abroad. It brings hither the ark of the middle ages, and thunders at the world which will not walk backward into it. Swarming about it are all forms of infidelity—for infidels are the legitimate children of superstition. And by superstition I mean all religious impulse from which the element of free individual reason is left out. Besides these come the minor sects. All sects swarm and multiply in the atmosphere and summer of liberty.

The mingling together of these strange materials, will give rise to quite enough of jarring and of activity; but we perceive still another element of discord in the conflict of social customs. Our Puritan fathers made channels, and Europe is furnishing the water that flows in them. We see that the land-marks are going. We see that under foreign influences our channels are becoming too narrow, and too straight. We perceive laws overwhelmed, sacred ideas rudely overborne, and the venerable Lord's day given up to festive songs, to dances and to bibulous hilarity. Many are alarmed, and think that the end of the world hath come. Nay, not by some space yet.

We should reflect, in regard to this, how differently the native-born citizen and the European emigrant have been related to this question of amusements. In America, so free have we been, so large an outlet has been given to our religious liberty, so large has been the expression of every political want, so free has industry been and so remunerative, that our people have not felt the need of amusements. These have seemed

like moths to our industry. We have found rest and exhilaration in other things. And to-day we urge amusements upon our people chiefly on moral and æsthetic and not at all upon political grounds.

But in Europe political liberty is mostly unknown, and religious liberty is a pinched dwarf. A crowded population have but slender hopes of wealth from industry. Human nature would explode if there were not some vent given to it. Not free on the side of religion, not free on the side of politics, and not free on the side of industry, somewhere the window must be opened to let the air in. This, alike, the hierarch and the monarch saw. Governments therefore fostered popular amusements. In these, almost only, the common people of Europe found themselves at liberty to do what they pleased. Amusements are the safety-valves of Europe.

Now, a people who have had the chief happiness of their lives clustering about amusements, come to a land where exceeding freedom has left almost no place for such things. We have liberty in association with politics, with religion, and with business; they with amusements only. With the German on the one side, and with the Yankee on the other, is the same instrument of liberty, and for the most part it plays the same tunes; but that instrument in the hand of the Yankee is set four notes higher than it is in Europe. It plays business, and commerce, and government, and religion, here. It plays amusements there. And liberty discords with liberty, because the instruments are not set to the same key. And when emigration brings all the pipers together, it is not surprising that the music clashes. It is next in mellifluous strains to the bagpipe;—and that is the instrument that was made to express what was left of sound after other instruments had used up all smoothness and harmony!

For the rest, emigration brings strength. On the whole, it is intelligent—not exactly in our way, but, nevertheless, intelligent. The Dane, the Swede, the German certainly, add to the cerebral power of the nation. The Irish add to its activity. They bring large actual wealth. They bring indomitable industry, which is the father of wealth. This is true of the mass. But to the educated men and women who come, we owe a greater debt. They bring to us a culture, a means of culture, in art, in science, in classic instruction, which lays us under solid obligations to them.

There are, however, other dangers of disintegration on this great nation, besides those which come from the conflict of old peoples moving among new ones. It is the general tendency of human nature to degenerate in the midst of great and long-continued physical prosperity. Our institutions are the best if they are the best served; but the poorest if poorly served. Republican institutions demand energetic

and virtuous citizens. Compared with oars, what vast advantage has the steam engine! But if for want of steam you attempt to work the engine by men's hands, it becomes far inferior to oars. Steam engines require steam. Superior institutions require superior motive-power, or they are worse than the governments of primitive force. And no where else is government subject to so much attrition, and so easily made feeble, as where it is republican.

The immense extent of our country, too, gives bold opportunity to the development, in its remote sections, of antagonisms which shall in times of heat and violence break up the nation into combative fragments. The recent failure of such an attempt ought not to breed undue security. Few know how near it came to success. It was an attempt, however, founded upon bad grounds, odious to the moral sense of the world. It had bad counsellors, and it followed a course of events which tended to arouse and unite the nation in behalf of union to a greater extent than before seemed possible.

But should the Pacific states, in another generation, for strong commercial reasons developed without slavery as an underlying cause, undertake a separation, the issue would probably be very different. Our late success, then, must not argue its like on every subsequent occasion; and the failure of the late attempt must not lead us to suppose that no more attempts will be made. If now, with slavery gone, these very Southern States, that lie exhausted temporarily, waiting a few generations, should, on grounds of mere political economy and of good government, again demand separation, the issue is not to be prophesied from the experience of the recent struggle. It is not wise, it is presumptuous to rest down in the belief that the question of union is settled forever. For, in the growths of the future, great regions of this nation will be so large and so vastly populous, that while they may be prevented from rupture by reason of transient passion or sudden anger, they can never be prevented from separation if their real interest lies in separation.

We cannot too deeply ponder this truth, that national unity cannot be secured except by making it the *interest* of each section to remain in unity. For, so vast are the outlying members of this nation, that there is no power, even in all that remains, to hinder any one of them, by-and-by, if it becomes its interest to leave the national organization.

Rhode Island may not be able to withdraw alone, nor New Jersey, nor Connecticut, nor South Carolina even, nor any single state, but the whole South, the whole Southwest, or the vast Pacific slope, move on different planes from single states. And that which might be prevented in a nook or corner, cannot be prevented on a quarter of a continent.

It was from peculiar reasons not likely to occur again, that military power was successful lately. Hereafter only moral power remains to

us. That, or nothing! For myself, while I long with intense patriotism for the continued unity of this nation, I by no means regard the future friendly separation of its parts with such repugnance and detestation as I did the late attempt. If four great republics, homogeneous, civilized, and not in antagonism, but friendly, should be created out of the one, I should fear no such evils as if vast fragments were to break off and organise governments of reaction, rear up a monarchy—or a servile aristocracy—and infix a principle of mutual antagonism into the organic structures of the separated parts. Yet, absolute political union of the whole continent is better, so far as we now can see. Separation will not be fatal. At the same time, unity is so much better, that it is the duty of every Christian patriot to lay wise plans, long forecasting, to maintain the present happy union, and to maintain it remembering that there is no band or strap of iron strong enough, that there is no political force so great, no sword so sharp, and no artillery so multitudinous, as to have power to hold together long the unwilling parts of so vast a republic as this; that if we are to maintain national unity, it is to be by common consent founded upon common interest. The arrogance of any part, whether it be the arrogance of intellect, or the arrogance of wealth, or the arrogance of skill, or the arrogance of political power, would tend to disaffect and drive off other parts of this great nation. There must be not simply conciliation, but organic working toward common moral, intellectual, physical and political interests. In that, and in that alone, we shall have stability in unity.

When it is once understood that our only hope of continued unity is to be found in the exertion of influence rather than of force, it will give a new impetus, it is to be hoped, to all the moral energies of Christian men.

Let us look at some few of the hopeful and potential elements by which we may prevent attrition, disintegration, and final separation.

First, we will consider the spread of intelligence. Knowledge is that which a man knows. Intelligence is that which knows it. Knowledge bears the same relation to intelligence which invested wealth does to that spirit of enterprise which creates wealth. One is the active cause. The other is the product or effect of that cause. Mere knowledge will not save men. Intelligence is a preservative force.

American institutions have been criticised as not producing knowledge of the highest kind, nor full symmetric culture; but all things in their order. The problems of an old society and of a new one are not the same. Intelligence is of more value to us than high culture, though high culture may be more valuable to an old monarchy than general intelligence, and of more value to us, by and by, than just now. It is giving eyes to the whole people to give them intelligence.

It gives them training enough, at any rate, to guide them safely in their paths. It gives them a certain instrument by which to resist the outburst of passion, and the warpings and bias of undue selfishness and interest. The eye of the engineer, the eye of the trained scientist, may be better than the eye of mere intelligence; but for the whole people, till such time comes, in the millennial day, that all may be engineers in eye, and scientists in eye, general intelligence in all is better than high training and fine culture in a few.

This intelligence is to be produced largely by the freedom of religious discussion in the land. For, of all things that are dangerous, nothing is more so than that unity which means stupidity—the mere not resisting or not discussing—the condition of inactivity, or torpid swallowing and deglutition. That which men most feel in religious discussion is that which is vital to it, and that which makes it an element of salvation to a nation. It is that it is fire, and that men cannot have fire put on them and sit still. It is that it comes from life in earnest, and wakes life in earnest again. And life is the one great necessary quality in national existence.

It is right here that patriotism and Catholicism are radically and irreconcilably in antagonism. There might be some agreement in respect to symbols and worship—though I cannot hope for much approximation. There might be some coming together on doctrines; but there can be no such thing as agreement on the question of the submission of men's religious understanding to an order of men appointed to think for them. Our people will never think by proxy—and that is the vital point of the Catholic Church. Authority it is called; but authority on the one side is non-independence on the other.

If Père Hyacinthe had denied transubstantiation, a way of forgiveness might have been found. If he had denied the infallibility of the Pope, he still might have been pardoned. If he had even denied orders in the priesthood, there might have been some escape. But for him to deny that superiors had a right to think for their inferiors; for him to stand in front of Europe, and dare to say, "I think my own thoughts, though my order and my superior think another way"—that is a treason that never can be cleansed, either by baptism or by blood.

The highly organized animals—the birds and beasts of the upper rank—select their own food, and reject what they dislike. They range the air or the earth, find, take, or leave, as it pleases their tongue. It is the round clam that lies still, and lets the water bring him what it will. It is the round clam—that pattern of devotion!—which opens, eats, shuts, and is a clam still. And the clam ranks not a degree higher on the scale because the whole ocean is so big, that brings in his food to him. He is but a clam.

So, though the church of two thousand years may roll in its waves upon the individual, if the individual only opens, takes, shuts, eats, digests, and opens, takes, shuts, eats, digests, it is but a clam spiritual. And Protestants are not clams. They are winged and legged. They wander wide, and fly far, and select diversely.

Many men may be fascinated by the poetry in the hierarchy; many may be juggled by its casuistry; many may be philosophically scared by its doctrine; but when it comes to that which is the spinal marrow of the question—the submission of individual liberty of thought to the authority of an organized class of thinkers—that will never go down in America—or rather it *will* go down!

But the conflicts which go on between sect and sect—between the greatest of all sects and the numerous minor sects—whatever they may have of mischief in their bitterness, have much also of education. And it is far better that religion, with all the mischiefs of division, be subdivided thus, if it keeps men alive and awake and at work, than that there should be one supreme unity without vitality.

I might mention, also, the distribution of intelligence, the progression of thought through books and newspapers; but time will not permit me to dwell upon that head, as I have other things in store.

I mention next, the ministration of the free common school, as vital to our hope as a great united republic covering a whole continent.

The free common school gives to every child the one indispensable element, intelligence. Not only does it teach him by the master, but the scholars are all masters to each other. There is an atmosphere of intelligence in the school, and a public sentiment of intelligence among the young and rising generation around the school house. Intelligence becomes, where common schools abound, one of the signs and tests of manhood. The question is no longer, "Who can throw the heaviest weight furthest?" or "Who can run and leap the most like a deer, or hug most like a bear?" Another test of manhood is introduced; and it is no more muscle that makes the man, but nerve, and brain—the father of nerve. Intelligence becomes popular in the district and in the village, and manliness goes up a grade, where common schools abound.

Thus it equalizes, too. For human life is incessantly creating diversity. And if such diversity were to be carried on, some men, or classes of men, would grow mountain-high, and the less favored would lie valley-low. And so, a kind of aristocracy would follow classification. Classification adheres in nature, but it ought not to reign except throughout the generation where it asserts itself. Aristocracy is individual. It does not belong to classes in perpetuity. As

an attribute of individual excellence and power, it is divine, and carries with it aspiration, and ambition, and lordly success. But if human life permits itself, by institutions, to hold these elevations for the prosperity of other individuals than those that have earned them, you have instantly classified human society into an artificial aristocracy and a low-lying common people.

Now, Brain is master and owner in this world. Men may make resolutions, and form combinations, and devise plans; but as long as God keeps his original decrees unchanged, so long brain will be found to own and to govern. And they that have it will be masters. They that have it not will be servants—with protest and rebellion, but under the decree of God. And the true equity which comes with an ideal democracy, must be that equity which gives to every man an equal share of brain-culture. He that has it not is made, by that very deprivation, lower than his fellow who has it. Democracy does not mean a universal level. It does not mean compulsory equality. It means equitable opportunity. No government has a right to thrust a strong man down to the level of weakness. No institution has a right to force a weak man up to the level of the strong. Organized society will always be graded. True equity classifies men into superior and inferior. All that can be rightfully demanded, is, that men shall have education, for their full development; opportunity, for the use of their powers; protection, from the grasp and greed of unjust passions in their fellow men. After that, men must find their own level. The liberty of becoming all that God gave to a man the power of being, is all a true philosophy can demand.

The common school, by beginning early in the child's life, by giving a new ideal of life, by affording the primal stimulus, not only, but by opening the eyes so that a man can avail himself of all the other *stimuli* which by-and-by he will meet, is keeping up a true democratic equality, by giving all men their own proper chance of brain power.

It is democratic in another sense, because it is bringing back to a common level again the irregularities produced by active life. Knowledge, riches, skill, I have said, create classes, and so inequalities. If, in the spring, you look along a level cultivated field where corn grew the previous year, you will see ridges that remain. Now comes the plow to turn over the soil, and all the old hillocks go down, and lie level again for the next crop. The common school is the plow that levels each generation of human life. All the children, without regard to superiorities or excellencies of parentage, have to come together and stand on a common dead level in the school-house. The schoolmaster does not call the roll of the boys by their parents' altitudes, but by the alphabet; and if A is a poor man's son, and B is a rich man's son, B comes after

A, notwithstanding. And the rich man's dunce stands below the poor man's smart boy—and *must*. In this little germinant republic of the common school, the boys whose parents live in vastly different mansions, and with vastly different customs, are brought down to the fellowship and brotherhood and communion of a common humanity; they are obliged to mix together, and they frame laws with each other. There is a public sentiment of the school which is just as real and as vital, and as despotic even, as the public sentiment of the greater community; and it is a good thing to bring down to the original starting-point all the elevations and inequalities which the various forces of active life produce, and to say to all the boys, "Your feet must stand on one level: now shoot your heads as high as you please!" Liberty of growth and equality at the start, is the law of true democratic life; and this is what the common school gives.

Under no excuse, then, let it be suffered to go to waste. It is not simply the knowledge that it gives, but the capacity to get knowledge which it breeds; it is not merely the intelligence which it puts in the way of the youth, but the fellowship and common feeling which grows up among the boys of different families, that makes the common school valuable. And it is to the last degree desirable, not only that it should be common, but that it should be *free*; and not only that it should be free, but that it should be *superior*. No community can afford to let a primary private school be better than their free common school. No academy should be permitted to be better than the district common schools. You cannot anywhere else so ill afford to be parsimonious, and call it economy, as in the administration of your common schools. Secure more buildings, larger buildings, better furniture, more teachers, with ampler support (for the support of common school teachers, especially of women teachers, is a shame and disgrace to our civilization), with more capacity, bringing hither the noblest men and the noblest women. This is political wisdom. And now here is wisdom so squandered, and folly so regnant, as where men are unwilling to be taxed, and are parsimonious in those revenues which go to maintain free common schools for all the children of the whole community. The rich and the proud, the aristocratic and the arrogant, may be unwilling to send their children with the "common herd;" but their children need it. It is one of the best things of their whole education; and they should be compelled to do it, not by law, but by the fact that they cannot find a private school that is as good as the public school.

These schools should not only be free and common, but they should be *unsectarian*. If it be needful that the teaching of technical religion should be excluded from our common schools for the sake of maintaining their

universality, I vote to exclude it. If it be needful that the Bible should not be read in the common schools in order to maintain their universality, their freedom, and their commonness, I should vote not to read it. Because I disesteem it? I, the son of a Puritan, and a Puritan myself; I, that would have burned at Oxford, and fought with Cromwell—I disesteem the Bible? Most venerable is it of all the memorials that have come down through all time to our day. More joy is in it for the common people, more comfort has it for the afflicted, than any other book. It is the very home of a true democracy. It is the very temple of liberty in this world. I regard the Bible as being that which stands between aggressive power and organized selfishness, and the welfare of the great mass of the common people. It is the common people's book; and there is no class of people that need to read it so much as the children of the poor and the needy. Therefore I would be glad if every emigrant's child, and every home-born child, of every faith, not only had the Bible, but had the opportunity to read it every single day. And yet, I would not force it upon any. And if the reading of the Bible obliges us to forego our principles of toleration, I shall maintain our principles of toleration. It was because they would not suffer others to impose their faith upon them, that our fathers came hither; and shall we, now that the power is with us, take the ground that we may impose our faith upon those who do not believe as we do, because they are in the minority? Shall we, after a hundred years, with all the growing light and knowledge which has come down to us on this subject, commit the fatal blunder that sent the Pilgrims across the sea in winter, to lay the foundations of this noble republic? We believe in the freedom of religion, and do not believe in forcing one man's faith upon another man. And this being so, how can you organize the common school, which is supported by the public funds, in such a way as to force the Bible on the Jews, who do not believe in the New Testament, or upon skeptical men who do not believe in either the Old Testament or the New? It is manifestly inconsistent with the great principles of Christian toleration in which we believe, and which we love. To say that a Christian nation has a right to have Christianity taught in its schools, even if it be distasteful to a minority, is to put forth a formula for arrogant sects as soon as they are in the majority. Put the term Catholic in the place of the word Christian in the foregoing sentence, and how would the logic suit a Protestant?

"What!" says the Catholic, with real fear and conscientious earnestness, "do you propose to bring up the children of the community a nest of infidels?" No, I propose no such thing. You might as well say, "Do you propose to bring up these boys in school a lazy set?" because husbandry is not taught in the common schools. We do not

teach the mechanic arts in the common school. There are a hundred things that society needs which are not taught in the common school.

In proportion to civilization, work is divided and subdivided. There is one kind of instrument for one function, and another kind of instrument for another function. Early in the primitive times, when a dozen functions clustered around one instrument, the teacher used to teach religion, the Bible and the catechism, as well as the spelling book and the arithmetic; but in our day of general intelligence we divide the functions of society, letting the church teach dogma, letting the family teach personal religion, and letting the common school perform the task of teaching intelligence. And because we take out of the common school the special function of teaching religious dogma and religious history, do we therefore take away religion from education? Is there no other religion but that? We teach the child to read; we teach him to seek knowledge as a means of manhood; we give him the impulse to learn; and we say, "If we may not give religious instruction in the school, there is all the more reason why we should bring upon the Christian household the responsibility of greater fidelity." Build up Sunday schools in greater numbers. See to it that the church becomes a true teacher of the whole community. Let religion be taught, without which a man is not a man in his whole nature, and is not fully equipped for this life or the life which is to come; but let us not forswear our own principles of toleration and oppress the conscience of the Jew, the skeptical minded man, the Chinaman, the Buddhist, or any person of any belief, or nation, or class. Let us not impose our religious books as a yoke upon others because we happen to have the majority and the power. That would be giving the charter of universal tyranny to power.

But are there no other ways of giving religious instruction? Do you suppose religion is all given to men when you have taught them the catechism? If a man can say the catechism—the Lesser catechism, or the Greater catechism, the Westminster catechism, the Episcopal catechism, or the Lutheran catechism—without stumbling, from beginning to end, is he a saint? Is religion all taught through such instrumentalities? By no means. If the teacher that stands in the school is an example of justice; if justice as represented by the teacher is sweetened by lenity; if the teacher is full of sympathy, and goes down to the dull and the stupid, and with infinite tenderness lifts them up, and supplies their want, is not that teacher better than any catechetical instruction? You cannot help having religion taught in the school if you have a *man* or a *woman* there. But it need not be dogma. It need not be instruction in the philosophy of religion. It is not theological doctrine alone which will teach religion. It is not anything

that belongs to the sects, as sects. It is that which is given to all. For I say that "whatsoever things are true," and "honest," and "just," and "pure," and "lovely," and "of good report," are esteemed by men outside of the sects as really as by men inside of them. The things which you and I believe to be essential elements of religion—the all-inspiring love-power, with its train of justice, and purity, and true sympathy—with those graces which it creates in the individual, those virtues of universal good report which dwell in every Christian bosom—these things all men believe in. Men believe in practical religion, though they may not believe in religious doctrines or institutions.

I therefore say, Let your common schools take care of that for which they were instituted—namely, universal instruction for the children of the community in the first elements of intelligence. Make the children readers. Give them such knowledge and training that they may become thereafter their own instructors. This is the function of the common school. And you cannot tax too heavily nor too often to secure the fulfillment of that function. The wisest expenditure a State can make is for the support of common schools. For every time you educate a child, you stop up a hole at the bottom of the ship of the commonwealth.

You will of course expect me to speak of religion, as one of the indispensable elements in producing unity and in maintaining the integrity of our national life.

The spirit of religion is reconciling and peace-bearing; but religion developed into a philosophy, or religion in the form of an institution, is pugnacious, and divisory; and always has been. The spirit of dogma is not useless. Nevertheless, it is pugnacious and divisive. The propagation of the church has always been a conflict. This is not to be reckoned a fault; but it shows that religion in this world passes through stages of development dependent upon the condition of the hearts upon which it is acting. While it works upon the lower portions of the disposition in the individual, and yet more strikingly in communities, we find it to be a disturbing force. But when by disturbance and strife, when by fermentation, human nature is at last brought to a higher condition; and communities are brought under the constant control of the higher reason, and of the moral feeling, then there is a true ripening and sweetening influence in religion. In other words, that which religion does at first, divides and shatters; but after a time, when, going through the necessary developments, religion comes to its last work, that will be "peace on earth, and good will to men."

It is true that the religion of to-day is doing an incalculable work of softening, smoothing and reconciling; but it is in the smaller organ-

izations of society, and not in governments and in whole communities, that its chief work is doing. Religion is enriching the household. It is making the relationships of the family far more pure and far nobler than ever they were before upon so broad a surface of population. It is refining social life, not simply by the progress of elegance, but by a larger good will and a truer fellowship than ever before existed. It is developing in individuals, purity, self-denial, benevolence, and true moral heroism. It is at work in society, restraining the outrage of passions, inspiring indolence with activity and enterprise, building up schools, cleansing the ways of business, and producing an intelligent morality.

This work is constantly going on. It is engaged still in its primary tasks. It is a fire, a sword, a war-trumpet. The music belongs to the future. As apples grow in their sourness, all summer long, and find their sweetness as they ripen in autumn, so the fruit of religion in its instituted life yet puckers the mouth with its acrid bitterness of immaturity. By-and-by it will ripen to sweetness.

Instead of unity, it now creates division. A hundred sects there are, and each one thinks itself to be the spiritual navel of the universe. All of them alike cry, "Come to me." Every sect in Christendom, from the oldest—the Greek and the Roman—down to the last and latest, which is proudly Christian on the ground of disowning Christ, is in its organic spirit selfish and intolerant. The spirit of the sects, whether in the Catholic, the Greek or the Protestant Churches, is exclusive, dictatorial, divisive. The membership are often far more Christian than the organization to which it belongs. At present, and especially in the relations of the sects to each other, it may be said that the combative conscience is the nerve of the church. Institutional religion has bred divisions, and it is its nature to do so. Sects are but the splinters and fragments which fly off by explosive violence of the moral sense of warrior Christians.

This is just as true of the Roman Church as of the Protestant, though the boastful and arrogant affirmation is widely prevalent to the contrary. The boasted unity of the Catholic Church is only the unity of a tenement house filled with quarreling families. The Protestant sects quarrel out of doors. The Catholic sects quarrel inside of the house. Twenty families pecking at each other in a tenement house—that is the Roman Church. Twenty families pecking at each other in separate houses of their own—that is the Protestant Church. There is no difference between them so far as division is concerned. Protestants bring forth sects and carry their young with them externally. The Catholic Church is *marsupial*. Like the opossum and the kangaroo, it brings forth its young; but it has a pouch into which they

run, and where they nestle and quarrel. There is as much quarreling in the pouch, as there is outside on the back.

I do not speak this to the prejudice of the Catholic Church. Though it will not be owned by them, I speak it to their credit. It is an honorable sign; because it is a sign of vitality. The age of unity has not come. We are living in the age of attrition, of division, of vitality by excitement. Many generations beyond us there will be a better time; but to-day vitality comes with agitation and division. So vastly predominant yet, in the individual and in the community, is the coarse and belluine element, that for a long time religion must be in conflict. A religion without conflict is dead.

Our past history is an illustration of the fact that religious institutions do not tend to national unity, or to any considerable power. The civil war was not checked by the spirit of the churches. The Presbyterian Church divided into the North and the South; the Methodist Church divided into the North and the South; and then the Episcopal Church divided into the North and the South. Indeed all national churches were split, and the halves stood in mutual oppugnation. The Baptist and Congregational Churches having no national form, by their very nature could not divide ecclesiastically; but the churches of the North and those of the South were morally separated as much as were the two halves of the national churches.

Neither do we perceive that the work of cohesion, unity and homogeneity, as it was not favored by religion in its sectarian forms, will be much helped by religious bodies, now that they are reunited; for, as hitherto, in this distressed world, it will so require men's religion to maintain the organic life and separateness of each sect, that they will have little to spend beyond that. The Catholic sect is busy with converting Protestants, and Protestants are busy with protesting against being converted. Calvin pursues Arminius, and Arminius pursues Calvin. John the Baptist is still at the Jordan immersing. The enginery of a hundred sects is brilliant, and all proclaim the lapse of others, and their own divinity. Meantime, religion, descending as a dove, rests silently upon a myriad souls, comforts sorrow, purifies love, overcomes fear, and visits men in prisons, at sick beds, in houses of poverty, amid trials and sufferings, saying, "Peace, my peace, I give unto you."

In the unity of the nation, and in the reduction of its materials, we hope much from Religion; very little from sectarian churches: much from the Spirit of God blessing the truth of his Word to the hearts of individual men; much from individual men that are nobler than their sect; much from free men whose adhesion to forms and ceremonies is the least part of their existence; much from religion as it exists in its

higher forms in individual natures and in public sentiment; very little from dogmas; very little from theology, as such.

And yet, if it could be understood by them, here is a new call to the sects, not to disband, but to hold each other in true fellowship; to act in harmony, if not in unity. The prevalence of gross immorality; the continental proportions of infidelity; the waste of the stock notions that is going on through tendencies generated by material science; the vast work of civilization and Christianization which *opens, impossible to quarreling sects, but not difficult to harmonious and co-ordinated denominations, each working and suffered to work in its own way, and suffering all others to work—these are providential calls to the great body of Christian men and women to truce; to new leagues of amity; to coöperation and to harmony.

We ask not that any should cast down their altar, but that they should permit us, on the other hand, to worship unharmed at ours. We ask not that any shall revamp their creed, but that it may not be considered a crime for us to maintain ours. We ask none to let the full sunlight pour through their windows, instead of shutting it out by colored and grotesque panes. If they prefer their windows let them have them; and let them permit us to have ours. Let us look for a true humanity, let us look for the true fruit of religion, not in the associated body of this or that denomination, but in the majesty and power of love in the individual hearts of those who are gathered into sects. Let us look no more into books, merely. Let men be the *living epistles* in which we shall read what the Spirit of the Lord hath to teach in any sect. Here, in the outpouring life, where religion means vital power, power of conscience, power of love, power of faith, power of beneficence, power of sympathy—here let there be coöperative harmony and true union. And if it please God, with a civilization which comes by commerce, which comes by intelligence, which comes by schools, which comes by the peculiar position of all parts of this land—if it please God, with this, at *length*, to give us a religion that shall teach men to love one another, then we shall be saved; our nation will be maintained by bonds made and riveted in heaven, which no instrument yet formed can cut or sunder.

Until men's reciprocal interests upon the higher plane of moral ideas shall be better understood, until religion shall be a uniting and not a divisive element, we must with more eagerness than ever, look to the harmonizing influence of men's reciprocal interests upon the lower plane of commercial and industrial life. So wide spread is this nation, that it has within itself almost all the elements of prosperity which other nations seek beyond their own borders. The far North and the extreme South work for different products, but in difference they find reciprocal

advantage. If legislation be hindered from impertinent interference and restriction of our home and foreign commerce, if industry be left free to find its own laws and channels, we shall have in commerce a force drawing together into undis severable unity the vast districts of this continent, and binding them, we are ashamed to say, with a force which cannot yet be found in moral or social influences. For human nature is as yet riper and wiser at the bottom than at the top. Self interest has more power in promoting peace and unity, than justice, humanity and religion.

I shall advert to but a single political agency in the maintenance of National Unity, and that is the sacred and jealous maintenance of the *Rights of the States*, and the vital local governments of States, as distinguished from the federal and national government. New England, from her earliest colonial days, with a fervor and intensity that have never been surpassed, preserved inviolate the one political doctrine which will enable this vast nation, if anything will enable it, to maintain Federal Unity; and that doctrine is, *the Rights of the States*. When the wholesome doctrine of States Rights reappeared in the South, it had in those warm latitudes undergone fermentation, and had passed into a new thing, viz: STATE SOVEREIGNTY. There can never be more than one sovereignty in a political body. The NATION *alone* is Sovereign. It is to be sure, a limited Sovereignty. The metes and bounds have been fixed. All within them is Federal, all without belong to the individual States. Within their own spheres the self jurisdiction of the States is absolute. It cannot be meddled with or usurped by the general government. Things belonging to any single State alone, and not to all the States in common, must be under the supreme disposal of that State. This simple doctrine of State rights—not State Sovereignty—will carry good government with it, through all the continent. No central government could have sympathy and wise administrative adaptation to the local peculiarities of this huge nation, couched down between two oceans, whose Southern line never freezes, and whose Northern border never melts.

The States are so many points of vitality. The nation, like a Banyan tree, lets down a new root where each new State is established, and when centuries have spread their gigantic commercial tree over a vast space, it will be found that the branches most remote from the centre do not impart their vitality, carrying it through the long intricate passages, from the parent trunk, but each outlying growth has roots of its own, and draws straight from the ground by organisms of its own, all the food it wants, without dissociating its top from the parent branches!

The dignity and power of National Sovereignty will be secured by maintaining unimpaired the local rights of the States.

Let us all labor for the unity of the nation, for the education of its citizens, for the spread of virtue and true morality, for the promotion of an industry which shall redeem the poor from servile and sordid drudgery, for the freedom of its commerce, for a more just and generous sympathy between all its races and classes, for a more benignant spirit to its religion, and finally, let us implore the God of our Fathers, by his own wise providence, to save us from our wanton passions, from impertinent egotism, from pride, arrogance, cruelty, and sensual lusts, that as a nation we may show forth his praises in all the earth!

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee, our heavenly Father, to make mention of thy manifold goodness, through which our lives have been spared, and by which we have been loaded with benefactions innumerable. Every hour of every day, every moment of every hour of every day, bears witness to thine unending care. Thou hast commanded all thy laws, that they forget us not; that they serve us. All the seasons are but thy servants, ministering to us, thy children. And thou thyself, by thy Holy Spirit, art evermore near to us, brooding upon our hearts; lifting us into life; bringing us toward thine own self by the sweet affinities of love.

For all thy goodness, which thou hast manifested to us severally, and in families, and in a community together, we desire publicly, and with unfeigned thanks, to render thee, this day, our praise. We would be glad before thee, and rejoice in the Lord. We thank thee that thou hast removed war from our borders, and given us again peace; and that all the manifold sufferings which came by reason of war are being salved by thy kind providence. We thank thee that there is the return again of prosperity, and that there are indications of returning confidence and love among alienated brethren. We thank thee for all the auspicious tokens which look forward to better times to come. We thank thee that there are the seeds of intelligence sown, and that they are springing up in such pleasant plants of righteousness. We thank thee that thou art giving to our citizens so much of harmony. And though there be much that is discordant yet, and though conflicts yet lie in our way, and we must take the future by storm, the kingdom suffering violence, and the violent taking it by force, yet we rejoice that there is so much of encouragement to arm us, and to comfort us; and we go forward in our way of life believing that thou, O Lord God of our fathers! who didst inspire them with wisdom to make wise laws and true governments, wilt be with their children, and inspire them with wisdom to maintain and execute wise laws; to keep intact true governments.

We pray that we may be delivered from all animal fury, and from all corrupting passions, and from all those ambitions and conflicts of interest by which we are in danger. We beseech of thee that all our strivings may be rivalries in friendship, and in thrift, by which life, and not death, shall spring up.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt accept our thanks this morning for the great prosperity of the seasons; for the harvests' abundance; for a propitious heaven and a fruitful earth. Accept our thanks for the measure of health which hath prevailed throughout our land; for the prosecution of so many enterprises of industry; and for their successful issues.

We thank thee that thou hast been pleased to grant stability to our government, and to our several governments in states. We thank thee that this great nation, so little time ago storm-tossed like the sea, and casting up its bloody waves to the very heavens, is tranquil, and that there are so many signs of continuing peace in our midst.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt accept our thanksgiving for all the blessed joys of the household; for the purity and virtue and joyfulness of our family life. We beseech

of thee that thou wilt accept our thanks for all the prosperity which has attended the schools and colleges and seminaries of learning in our land; that so many have resorted to them; and that so many are going out from them, as stars in the night, to bear light and guidance to those that are less favored.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt accept our thanksgiving for all the mercies which thou hast vouchsafed to us through our church. Although we behold its weakness, and its manifold imperfections, its foundations having been laid, and it having been builded by human hands, yet we rejoice that thou art willing to abide in such instrumentalities, that thou mayest bless thy people. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt purify more and more thy ministering servants. And may all those that teach be taught of God. We rejoice that thou art not content with any of the channels which are appointed. More than the church can hold is thy favor to man. Greater than all else is that out pouring light of thy free Spirit which blesses men as the noonday sun in all the earth. And we pray thee, O Lord our God! that thou wilt continue the God and Father, the Redeemer and Saviour, of mankind. Arm and equip all those great agencies that have power in them, that they may work for that which is spiritual in man, and not for that which is animal.

Bless the nations of the earth. Remember not alone our own land, but all lands. May the work of civilization go forward. May knowledge take the place of ignorance, and true faith the place of superstition, and all the earth see the salvation of our God.

Let thy blessing rest with us while we shall yet sing forth thy praises, and while we shall speak messages of instruction. Be with us in all the changes of this day. And as we are gathered together in our houses, with our dear children and friends around about us, let not our love and joy grow selfish. May we remember the less favored. May our sympathies go out to all the children of want, everywhere, around about us.

And so may we live in the midst both of sorrows and joys, chastised by the one and comforted by the other, until we are prepared in this school of life for our heavenly home. Then, through riches of grace in Christ Jesus our Lord, take us to our everlasting life. And we will give the praise to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON

Grant, we beseech of thee, our heavenly Father, thy blessing to rest upon the year that begins, now, from this the anniversary of our public thanksgiving. Grant that the light of truth and of knowledge may shine more brightly in the year that is to come, than it has in the year that is past. Grant that all the influences of thy Spirit, working out true religion in vital forms, may more and more prevail through the coming year. May we be faithful to our several instruments; but may we not vex each other. Let not Ephraim vex Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim. May there be peace in our borders—peace not alone in outward interest; peace not alone where men's selfishness teaches wisdom; but peace to the conscience, peace in faith, and peace in loving. And so may thy name be glorified. We ask it through Christ our Redeemer. *Amen.*

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Machines of all the approved makes are kept on hand, or furnished to order. They are sold at the Manufacturer's prices, with all their guarantees. Purchasers have here the advantage of seeing and testing all kinds together, and are thereby enabled to choose the Machine best adapted to their wants. They have also the privilege, if not suited in their first choice, of exchanging for any other kind. Full instructions are given gratuitously.

Machines are also Rented by the Day, Week, or Month, either with or without the privilege of purchasing, which gives an opportunity to test them thoroughly before buying.

We also deal in SECOND-HAND Machines—Buying, Selling, Exchanging, etc. Old Machines are Cleaned, Adjusted, and Modernized, and supplied with all the Tools, Fixtures and Attachments required in their use. Needles, Thread, Oil, Soap, etc., of the best quality, are kept constantly on hand, and sold at the lowest prices.

Operators, with or without Machines, are sent into Families; and Machine Stitching of all kinds is done at the EMPORIUM.

The establishment is complete in its arrangements, and possesses, under the new management, superior facilities for conducting the business. Every effort will be made to please those who favor us with their patronage.

In dealing with this establishment you have
this advantage:

YOU CAN

EXCHANGE

FOR ANY OTHER MAKE

If your first choice should prove
NOT SATISFACTORY.

Machines sent to all parts of the country, and guaranteed to suit.

Full information as to prices, terms, etc., given to all who send address, stating the kind of work they wish to do.